

The 'only begetter' of the *Monumenta* was the eminent Prussian statesman and patriot, the Baron Karl vom Stein. Stein was a statesman of energy, foresight, honesty and determination whose greatness, on a long view, must be reckoned indisputable.¹ He was also a man of wide intelligence and culture, with a particular interest in history, and a conviction that nothing would better serve the cause of German nationhood than a full knowledge of the medieval Empire. Retiring into private life after the Congress of Vienna, he had leisure to use his influence and means in furthering his ideas. He had discussed his hopes with friends such as the brothers Grimm, Goethe, Eichhorn and Savigny, and a number of proposals had been made, among others one of Wessenberg for a network of central and regional associations with government funds and princely patronage. This and other schemes like it broke down upon the hard reef of finance, and the actual beginning was due to Stein alone who enlisted the help of two scholars Büchler and Dümge, the latter of whom drew up a prospectus of a publishing and editing society (24 June 1818), while Stein began a search for subscribers. Finally, a meeting took place at Frankfurt on 20 January 1819, at which Stein and four leading politicians agreed on a plan establishing Dümge as general editor and Büchler as secretary of the enterprise, and on June 12 the constitutions of a society, *Die Gesellschaft für Deutschlands ältere Geschichtskunde*, were approved, and remained in force (if that is the word) for more than fifty years.

The association thus called into being had an unusual organiza-

A[rchiv], xlii (1921), is authoritative, and has been followed throughout. References are given as *Bresslau*. It may be supplemented by Wattenbach-Levison-Holtzmann, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen in Mittelalter* (edn. 1952), i, 17-28; G. Waitz, 'Über die Zukunft der M.G.H.', in *Historische Zeitschrift*, xxx (1873), 1-13; and E. Dümmler, 'Über die Entstehung der M.G.H.', in *Im neuen Reich* (Leipsic, 1876). A volume by H. Heimpel, *Organisationsformen deutscher Geschichtswissenschaft*, commemorating the centenary of the birth of P. F. Kehr, is scheduled for publication early in 1960 (Göttingen-Zürich).

¹ Stein's biography has been written by G. H. Pertz (6 vols. in 7, 1849-55), Sir J. M. Seeley, *The Life and Times of Stein* (3 vols., 1878), and G. Ritter, *Stein, eine politische Biographie*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart-Berlin, 1931; repr. 1958). For a short account see the article by J. Holland Rose in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th edn. (1911). Stein was assisted by others, especially by J. A. v. Aretin, but the latter is not entitled to the share attributed to him in *N[eu]e D[eutsche] B[iographie]*, s.v. Aretin, J. A.